

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for comparing a first document and a second document

5 comprising the steps of:

inserting at least one compare attribute into one of the first document and  
the second document; and

comparing the first document and the second document in a manner based  
on the compare attribute.

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2. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of inserting at least one compare  
attribute into one of the first document and the second document includes the step  
of

inserting one of an ignore element attribute, an ignore attributes attribute,  
and an unordered attribute.

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3. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of inserting at least one compare  
attribute into one of the first document and the second document includes the step  
of

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inserting an ignore element attribute;

wherein the step of comparing the first document and the second document  
in a manner based on the compare attribute includes the step of

when comparing the first document and the second document, ignoring the  
elements specified by the ignore element attribute.

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4. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of inserting at least one compare  
attribute into one of the first document and the second document includes the step  
of

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inserting an ignore attribute attribute;

wherein the step of comparing the first document and the second document in a manner based on the compare attribute includes the step of

when comparing the first document and the second document, ignoring the  
5 attributes specified by the ignore attribute attribute.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of inserting at least one compare attribute into one of the first document and the second document includes the step of

10 inserting an unordered attribute;

wherein the step of comparing the first document and the second document in a manner based on the compare attribute includes the step of

when comparing the first document and the second document, ignoring the order of the elements specified by the unordered attribute.  
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6. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of comparing the first document and the second document in a manner based on the compare attribute includes the step of

20 parsing the first document to generate an first internal representation thereof;

parsing the second document to generate an second internal representation thereof;

comparing non-tagged elements of the first internal representation and the second internal representation;

comparing non-tagged attributes for each element; and

25 comparing child nodes in a non-ordered manner when a non-ordered tag is set to true in the parent node.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of comparing the first document and the second document in a manner based on the compare attribute includes the step of

searching for an unordered attribute;

5 when an unordered attribute is not detected or an unordered attribute has a first predetermined value, performing a comparison between the first document and the second document; wherein the order of the elements is considered in the comparison;

10 when an unordered attribute has a second predetermined value, performing a comparison between the first document and the second document; wherein the order of the elements is not considered in the comparison.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the first document and the second document include documents in a markup language.

15 9. The method of claim 8 wherein the markup language is one of XML, HTML, SGML, WML, and XHTML.

20 10. A method for comparing an expected response and an actual response, the expected response including at least one node that includes an ignore element attribute comprising the steps of:

composing an expected response that includes at least one node that includes an ignore element attribute;

25 when comparing the nodes of the expected response with the nodes of the actual response, skipping those element nodes specified by the ignore element attribute of a parent node.

11. The method of claim 10 further comprising the steps of:

composing an expected response that includes at least one node that includes an ignore attribute attribute;

when comparing the nodes of the expected response with the nodes of the actual response, skipping those attributes specified by the ignore attribute of a current node.

12. The method of claim 10 further comprising the steps of:

composing an expected response that includes at least one node that includes an unordered attribute;

wherein the step of comparing the first document and the second document in a manner based on the compare attribute includes the step of

when comparing the first document and the second document, ignoring the order of the elements specified by the unordered attribute.

13. A test infrastructure for interacting with a server that has capabilities comprising:

a) a test suite for use in testing the capabilities of the server; wherein the test suite includes an expected response for a first request and at least one reference to information not known to a tester when preparing the test suite;

b) an injection module for receiving information from the server, for generating an actual response based on the received information, and for replacing the reference with a target in the actual response that is referenced by the reference; and

c) a comparison module for comparing an actual response with an expected response.

14. The system of claim 13 wherein the comparison module includes

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a compare elements module for selectively comparing elements in the documents to be compared based an ignore element attribute.

15. The system of claim 13 wherein the comparison module includes

5 a compare attributes module for selectively comparing attributes in each of the elements based on an ignore attribute attribute.

16. The system of claim 13 wherein the comparison module further includes

10 an ordered handling module for performing a comparison that considers the order of the elements.

17. The system of claim 13 wherein the comparison module further includes

15 an un-ordered handling module for performing a comparison that does not consider the order of the elements when an unordered attribute is present.

18. The system of claim 13 wherein the comparison module further includes

20 an element skipping mechanism for skipping elements specified in an ignore element attribute during comparison.

19. The system of claim 13 wherein the comparison module further includes

25 an attribute skipping mechanism for skipping attributes specified in an ignore attributes attribute during comparison.